

CHRISTINE O. GREGOIRE
Governor



STATE OF WASHINGTON
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

P.O. Box 40002 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0002 • (360) 753-6780 • www.governor.wa.gov

February 16, 2006

The Honorable Norm Dicks
United States House of Representatives
2467 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Congressman *Norm Dicks*:

I am writing to express concern about President Bush's just-released 2007 budget proposal that eliminates funding for two Indian health organizations in our state: the Seattle Indian Health Board and the NATIVE Project in Spokane.

These two agencies are a vital part of our state's health care safety net, serving large numbers of Indian people who have come to Seattle and Spokane for jobs, schooling, and other opportunities. As an integral part of the community health center network, they also serve large numbers of non-Indian residents who are low-income and uninsured, certainly among the most needy of our citizens.

Washington has a long, proud tradition of supporting Indian causes and welcoming Indian people who wish to live and work in this beautiful state. The Seattle Indian Health Board and NATIVE Project are essential health care providers and cultural centers for Indian people living in cities. We both know that severe health disparities continue to plague specific populations that include American Indians and Alaska Natives. This serious issue won't be addressed by allowing these two organizations to falter due to the loss of federal financing from the Indian Health Service.

As a member of the House Committee on Appropriations, you are in a position to influence the outcome on this important issue. While I also have concerns about other programs jeopardized in the President's budget, and will soon send you a comprehensive list of these concerns, I must call out, now, specifically asking that you work to reject the President's plan to cut funding for urban Indian health. I greatly appreciate your efforts to, instead, do what you can to ensure that the Seattle Indian Health Board and the NATIVE Project in Spokane remain essential community resources.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris".

Christine O. Gregoire
Governor

cc: Craig Bill, Executive Director, Governor's Office of Indian Affairs
Robin Arnold-Williams, Secretary, Department of Social and Health Services
Mark Rupp, Governor's Executive Policy Advisor



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The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
173 Russell Senate Office Building 2
Washington, D.C. 20515

of Monday

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As a member of the Senate Committee on Budget and the Senate Committee on Appropriations, you are in a position to influence the outcome on this important issue. While I also have concerns about other programs jeopardized in the President's budget, and will soon send you a comprehensive list of these concerns, I must call out, now, specifically asking that you work to reject the President's plan to cut funding for urban Indian health. I appreciate your efforts to, instead, do what you can to ensure that the Seattle Indian Health Board and the NATIVE Project in Spokane remain essential community resources.

Chris

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